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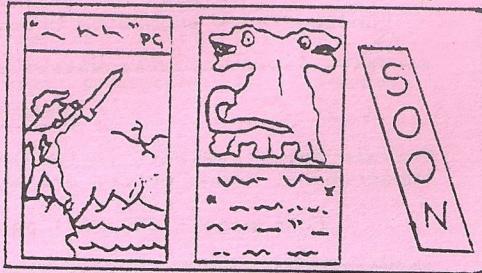
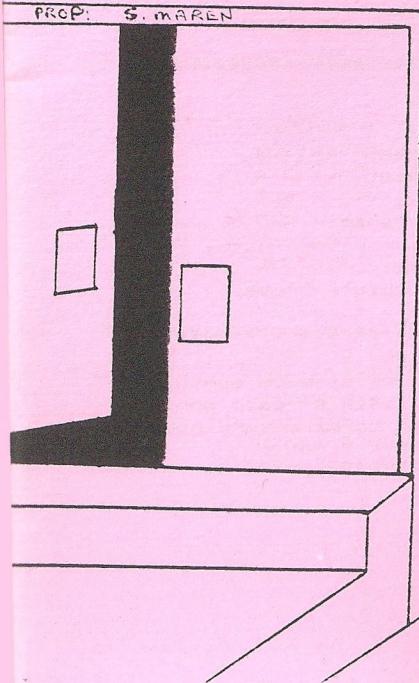
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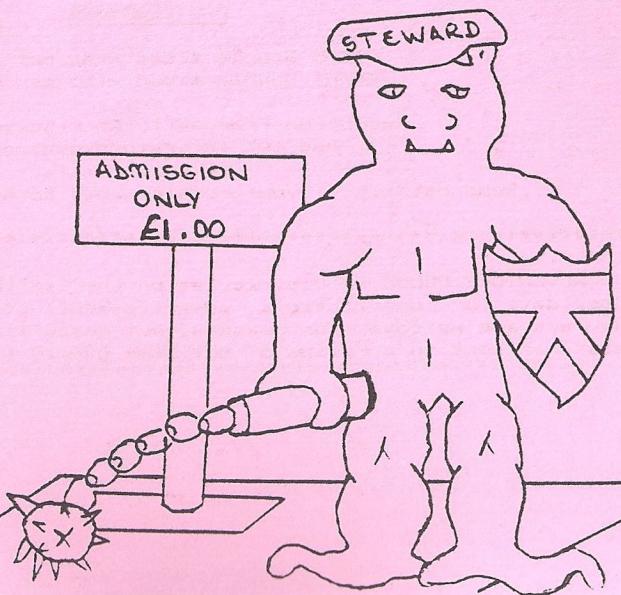


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EDITORIAL

Welcome to Issue 18 of Probe.

Firstly, my apologies to anyone who has been kept waiting longer than usual for a reply to their letter. I've taken time off this last month to concentrate on getting my own adventure to a playable state. It is now in the last throes of playtesting and I plan to release it on the 1st December 1987 for Amstrad CPC machines. I've decided to market it myself as it is a text only game and I don't think it would be worth sending it to a publisher. I refuse to put graphics in the game just to read in a review 'the graphics do nothing to enhance the game', as appears in so many reviews of adventures. (The fact that I can't draw either did have some bearing on my decision.)

Secondly, I've been to a computer show (at last) and had a wonderful day out in Manchester. I met Sue Burke, and can verify that she is 'totally mad' - her own words. The show itself wasn't all that spectacular, especially on the CPC side but I spent most of the afternoon in the bar, and didn't touch one alcoholic beverage - can't say the same for anyone else though! My verdict: the show wasn't up to much but the company was good.

There's an Adventurers' Convention on November 28th in Sutton. I shall be going as my sister lives in Sutton so I've got free accomodation. If anyone else is going let me know and we could arrange to meet. For more information, or advance tickets (£2.50 on the door or £2 in advance, SAE please) contact David Wilkins, 21 Village Row, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 6JZ, Tel: 01 642 3102, Prestel mailbox 016423102. The event is a joint promotion by Clubspot Adventure Helpline and Sutton Library Computer Club.

That's about it for this month. Hope you enjoy the magazine and see you all next month.

Sandra

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BEGINNERS TIPS

In response to the request in Issue 16 for details of frustrating (to put it mildly) experiences when adventuring, I would like to offer the following as "words to try".

1. WAVE - Try this with anything resembling a rod/stick/staff/wand etc. at any location where you cannot cross a gap/cannot see an exit/want to open a magical door/want to get rid of something around the corner.

2. RUB - Do this to anything that gives light but gets dim after some time/to anything resembling jewellery (especially rings)/as strange things can happen.

I learned most of this when playing Dungeon Adventure and Sphinx Adventure. I think I must be the only adventurer who did not know I had to RUB LAMP when it gets dim in Sphinx Adventure.

----- BARBARA GIBB -----

There is one thing that I can think of that may be of help when mapping (I love mapping and exploring), and that is - after I've made the rough map when playing, I do a proper one, and use coloured pens. The articles found in each location I put in Red letters, and the problems/monsters in Green. That way, when I have to go over old ground I can see quickly the locations that had objects or problems.

----- MARGO PORTEOUS -----

My way of overcoming problems that demand a specific input is to try all the synonyms I can think of. If that doesn't work then I write out in full exactly what it is that I am trying to do. A perfect example is in Mural when you know that you have to get a coupon from a newspaper in order to progress in the game. The way I found the correct input was to write on a scrap of paper CUT THE COUPON OUT OF THE NEWSPAPER. As this particular adventure was verb/ noun input I tried various combinations of two words until I hit upon "COUPON OUT".

Another problem that is quite common in some of the older adventures is that you have to be CARRYING a specific object in order for the correct input to work; very often the only response you get is the dreaded "You can't", no clue as to why you can't do it! For example, you know that you have to lever something open because you've read a hint somewhere so you confidently type "LEVER object", it doesn't work! What you haven't been told is that you have to be CARRYING a crowbar or something similar. So check your Inventory and make sure that you have an object in your possession that will enable you to succeed with what you are trying to do.

Never be too embarrassed to ask for help, most of us have to at some time or another.

----- Sandra -----

(Have YOU got any tips for beginners?)

SOFTWARE REVIEWS

THE ALIEN FROM OUTER SPACE/DRAGON'S TOOTH - Incentive's Double Gold -
Price £7.95 - Machine BBC B

THE ALIEN is a text and graphics adventure cum strategy game. You play a head scientist summoned to a British Antarctic Research Station which has been invaded by an Alien Life Form (ALF). When you arrive, six of the original team are still alive, but one or more could be a mutant. You have to decide who they are, and find ways of destroying them. A full scenario is given on the package inlay, and is worth reading as it contains clues on characters and methods of destruction.

As the game is set in the confined area of a research station, only 30 locations are used, 16 rooms and 14 corridors. All are excellently illustrated (at the top of the screen). The draughtsmanship is perfect, and more than makes up for the prosaic text which scrolls underneath and simply advises you which location you have entered, what you can see and available exits. Inputs are extremely tedious at times as they have to be very precise.

The adventuring part is mapping the well laid out rooms and corridors, and discovering essential items. Nothing seems out of place; some items are inside sealed/locked/closed containers, some are cleverly disguised as everyday "household" objects. The strategy begins when random elements seem to take over and your best planned solution has to be amended because, for example, the lights go out before you have found the torch. The characters are passive until taken over by ALFs, then they set fire to rooms and fight viciously. I think the hardest part of the game is to wound a mutant before you can go in for the kill. The methods of wounding and killing have to be discovered - various bits of paper advise you which items are necessary for making weapons. How and in which order you get them is up to you. In one room is a device which tells you how many ALFs there are at any given time. To win, you must kill them all. It isn't easy. There doesn't seem to be any specific order of action guaranteed to win, therefore if you like a change from the usual dungeons and dragons type adventure, this will fill in quite a few dark evenings during the winter.

THE DRAGON'S TOOTH is a text adventure plus 3 illustrations. You play a villager whose lands have been devastated by a Dragon created by a sorceror from the north. An elf from your village had slain the dragon, but in turn was killed by sentinels. The dragon's head was mounted above the entrance door to the mountain, and one of his teeth was taken by the evil sorceror to ensure the curse remained over the lands. An old wizard used his powers to beat the sorceror but later was overpowered by the sentinels and imprisoned inside a deep maze. He sends a message back to the village saying that if someone could find and give him the tooth he could lift the curse.

There are over 60 locations but only three of them are illustrated, a fact not made clear on the inlay. Inputs are usually verb and noun, occasionally an adverb has to be added. Location descriptions are sparse and EXAMINE and LOOK don't always give you all the information necessary.

You can carry/wear up to 12 items, and all portable objects have a use. The beginning is rather poor but picks up a bit later on. Some puzzles may be difficult, and some bugs in the programming and mistakes in the wording don't help, so SAVE frequently is the best advice I can give. Of the useful items my favourite was the Pocket beastie, especially if you RUB it. The maze is quite easy to map, I am glad to say. You must map the maze as that is where you must take the tooth to give to the wizard.

PACKAGING The inlay is very comprehensive. It gives full storylines on each adventure, plus help with input commands. The one let-down is the illustration. I hope no-one buys an adventure just because the picture on the box looks good; it is, after all, the contents that matter; however, the Alien seems more scared than scary, and a more exciting picture would surely attract more attention when on display in a shop.

CONCLUSION With two such contrasting adventures (both written on the GAC) it is difficult to predict which one will be more popular.

PERSONAL CHOICE The Alien on the 'A' side justifies the gold medal and the price of £7.95. The Dragon's Tooth on the 'B' side gets a silver medal and could be considered as more of a bonus.

Reviewer - BARBARA GIBB - BBC

INCENTIVE'S DOUBLE GOLD LABEL

Amstrad CPC - NOVA and HAUNTED HOUSE - £7.95

NOVA is a Techno Graphic Adventure set in a wrecked space station. Can you annihilate the cyborgs or even activate any of the mysterious alien equipment? - Programmed by Jem Wyer.

HAUNTED HOUSE - Programmed by Jason Twigg.

Commodore 64 - ZODIAC and THE SECRET OF LIFE - £7.95

ZODIAC - You and your tribe are about to be wiped out by Ramus. It is said that the only defence against evil is in the stars. Your mission is to find the twelve signs of the Zodiac. - Programmed by Andrew Osborne.

THE SECRET OF LIFE - Programmed by Mark Jennings.

BBC B - THE ALIEN FROM OUTER SPACE and DRAGON'S TOOTH - £7.95

THE ALIEN FROM OUTER SPACE - "We cannot say whether we have killed all the mutants or not. The Alien Life form may still be hidden inside one of us, but we don't know who, so we cannot trust one another. Help us to destroy it before it destroys us."

Programmed by Andrew Pickford.

DRAGON'S TOOTH - Programmed by Philip McHardy.

INCENTIVE MEDALLION GRAPHIC ADVENTURE

Spectrum - KARYSSIA - £7.95

KARYSSIA is a fantastic three part adventure featuring:- Puzzles, Combat, Isometric Graphics, Speech, Skill and Stamina and a Money System. - Programmed by D. & R. Shacklady.

Incentive Software Ltd., 2 Minerva House, Calleva Park,
Aldermaston, Berkshire. RG7 4QW

These new "doublepack" adventures come to you courtesy of the creators of CASTLE EERIE, SHIPWRECK and PRINCE OF TYNDAL ... Gladys and Gerry Officer. Like those previous releases, these titles have been written with the Quill and its suite of add-on utilities, and they display the technical competence which we have come to expect from these two authors. Good use has been made throughout of redesigned character sets, neat graphics, nice EXAMINE command, and a nifty "screen dissolve" routine ... as well as the usual features (i.e. pictures on/off, Ramsave/load, etc.).

The Prospector

The year is 1849. The place is Tombstone Creek. You have joined thousands of other people in a mad scramble for gold. You arrive at this one-horse town in California, almost broke and with no possessions. You must use your wits to get some money, buy or find the necessary equipment, and then go prospecting to find a mine. In Tombstone Creek itself is the Assay Office. You must return with proof of your find in order to successfully register your claim.

If this plot sounds familiar to some of you, it could be because this game, in its original incarnation, was previously released by the infamous Central Solutions on one of its ten-pack compilations. It has now been substantially revamped and revised (it says here) before being re-released by Tartan Software. I haven't actually seen the Central Solutions version, so I can't really say just how much of the adventure has been changed, and I therefore can't judge if it would be worthwhile playing the Tartan game if you've already played the earlier one. Perhaps somebody who has seen both versions would like to let us all know?

There is no actual HELP command in the adventure proper. However, a brief list of "Playing Hints" is given at the end of the "Introduction and Instructions" part of the game. This is an unusual inclusion, and, its biggest drawback, as far as I can see, is that you don't know whether it is going to give you the help you need until you've read all the way through it ... and by then, you may have learned something you didn't really want to know. But that's the chance you take! To be fair to this feature, it doesn't actually give you any explicit answers to any of the problems in the game ... the hints are much more of a general nature. I liked it, and found it to be useful ... and, on the basis that some help is always better than none, I'm glad that the authors decided to include it.

Into the game itself ... and the first problem you're likely to discover is that you only possess ten dollars in cash, but every single item on sale in the town costs ten dollars each! You're obviously going to have to acquire some of the folding stuff before you are going to get very far.

However, the first problem you are going to have to solve (otherwise, you won't get anywhere at all) concerns a BAG. You find it lying innocently on the town Rubbish Dump. "EXAMINE BAG" tells you that it has a lot of holes in it. In fact, it looks more like a net!

Now the problems in this game (and its partner) are fairly tough. There's no two ways about that! And one of the reasons that they are tough is because the game does not take you by the hand and lead you gently from one premise to the next until you finally put question and answer together and solve the problem. All the solutions to all the problems are logical, but they often require several logical

steps to be taken, and not all of the steps take place in the game, some must take place in your head only!

The BAG, as well as being the first problem you absolutely must solve in order to get the game to open up, is a prime example of this technique. You could be forgiven for thinking, from the information given by the response to EXAMINE, that you were expected to use this BAG as a NET ... perhaps to strain something through, or to trawl the nearby river. But, you'd be wrong. What the response to EXAMINE is actually telling you is that this is a STRING BAG (full of holes ... like a net ... yes?)!! But deducing that is not enough! You must now take it one step further and realise that by using "UNRAVEL BAG" you can get yourself a nice long LENGTH OF STRING!! (This is going to be useful to you, believe me.).

So, as I say, a logical solution ... but the logical deduction must take place inside your head, there is nothing in the game which is going to help you stumble on the right thing to do! Not all of the problems in the game are like this ... some are much more straightforward ... but a goodly number are. So, prepare to have your brain cells stretched!

The Crown Of Ramhotep

Some time ago, you received by carrier a package containing an ancient Scroll, a curious Box, and a Letter from an old friend (a well known archaeologist). The Letter read as follows:

"Dear John,

as you may have heard, I have been excavating in Egypt, and I have made a remarkable discovery. I have found the "Crown of Ramhotep"! But, I had to flee, leaving the Crown inside its pyramid. I was fortunate to escape with my life!

I intend to set out on another expedition to the pyramid as soon as possible. Please come and help me to get this fabulous treasure.

I suggest that you come to the village on the Nile where we met last year, and then journey south to the oasis. All being well, I will meet you there, and we can share the glory of this discovery together.

Yours sincerely,
Bill"

Well, it's like a red rag to a bull, isn't it? Treasure! Glory! How can you resist? You can't! So before anyone can say "Tutankamin ... Tutankimming ... Tututhrou ... Pharoah!", you're offski! Egypt bound, hell bent for leather!"

Which is where the game starts ... in that little village beside the Nile. You will need to explore thoroughly, and perform certain tasks, before you set out on your journey to the oasis. Some money, for instance, to pay your hotel bill would definitely be useful, and some way of translating all the Egyptian writing about the place might be handy ... and don't forget some petrol for your car, as getting stranded out among the sand dunes will do nothing to improve your outlook on life, I guarantee you!

Neither will the reception awaiting you at the oasis! However, thankfully, the incident does not prove to be fatal, and you are soon on your way again. If you can survive the sandstorm which soon blows up, you will soon make contact with your friend. But, he's not feeling very well ... in fact, he's dead! Which means you're all on your own, and you don't know where the pyramid is! Diligent searching amongst the miles and miles of dunes will eventually bring you to it, and even more diligent searching will reveal the way in. Then, your problems really start ...

Food, drink and an adequate air supply will all play a part in this adventure, and failure to avail yourself of these items at the required time will soon result in a painful demise. You will also find that, at times, more than one course of action is open to you. Each course will seem to yield the same, usually desirable, result (I'm particularly thinking of the means you employ to gain money at the start), however, it is only much later on that you learn the error of your ways, and that only one course of action is the correct course!

Like The Prospector, some of the problems in this game are pretty tough (employing the same "leaps of logic" technique) and others are of the immediately obvious variety. However, you will not find the going easy, but you will find it challenging.

As before, the authors have included a "Playing Hints" section in the "Introduction and Instructions" part of the game ... and my recommendation would be to read it all! It won't give you nearly enough information to help you complete the game, but it will give some idea of the direction and approach you should be taking.

And a final note, the game contains a couple of nicely implemented tunes! Not very usual in an adventure (although I remember that Neil Talbott's DUKE BLUEBEARDS CASTLE contained a good rendition of Beethovens Fifth), but nice to hear anyway. You could almost do a sand-dance to the little tune you get to accompany the congratulatory message at the conclusion of the adventure. A very nice touch!

This latest "doublepack" is well up to the usual Tartan standard. The games are skilfully constructed and well implemented ... and the price, as they say, is right. My only reservation would be that the two games bear some slight similarities in the way that they are constructed which gives you the feeling that they are being written to the same formula. Not altogether a bad thing ... as long as the formula is changed at regular and frequent intervals.

Good games, which will provide a stiff challenge for all those who enjoy stiff challenges. Recommended!

Jim O'Keeffe

Available for Spectrums only from:
TARTAN SOFTWARE, 61 Bailie Norrie Crescent, Montrose, Angus, Scotland, DD10 9DT.

HALL OF FAME

Thanks to the following readers for sending in contributions over the last month:

Bob Astley, Alf Baldwin, Doreen Bardon, John Barnsley, Paul Brunyee, Sue Burke, Pete Gerrard, Barbara Gibb, Jack Higham, Jackie Holt, Jim O'Keeffe, Mandy Rodrigues, Neil Shipman, Richard Teesdale, Paraskevas Tsourinakis, Mike Wade, Kay and Graham Wheeler, Linda Wright, and thanks to Simon Maren for the front cover.

LURKING HORROR - Infocom - RRP CBM, ATARI, AMSTRAD £24.99
ATARI ST AND AMIGA £29.99

In the usual Infocom style the player finds him/herself right in the middle of a mystery from the very first screen. As a Student of the G.U.E. Institute of Technology you find that you have left the completion of your assignment to the very last minute yet again. Of course, you have everything you need to complete the paper stored on your computer in the Tech. so, hurrying through the cold and snow you make your way to the terminal room where your powerful PC is waiting for you. It is here that you meet up with the first of many characters in this adventure, this time a friendly hacker. Everything seems perfectly normal until you power up your PC and begin work on your assignment. Suddenly everything seems to go wrong. Strange and sinister poetry suddenly has you riveted to the screen and you can't move! Against your will you find yourself drawn closer and closer to the screen until you suddenly pass out and find yourself in a strange dark place full of eerie, shadowy shadows!

Thankfully you don't stay in those chilling locations for long before you find yourself coming round again in the terminal room with the friendly hacker bending over you in great concern. The player may feel somewhat relieved to be back in the normal world once more but be warned, this is only the start of a great adventure which leads the player further and further into one chilling encounter after another throughout an extremely engrossing adventure.

I played the adventure with great enjoyment as I do most of the Infocom offerings but I must admit that I found this adventure to have that little extra that manages to hold me glued to my computer until well into the early hours of the morning. I can assure you that there is not just one lurking horror but a great many waiting to creep up on you during the game.

This is one adventure that definitely doesn't need graphics. The creepy location descriptions and messages are quite sufficient to imprint the eerie sense of a chilling evil and horror creeping into what should normally be a modern high tech setting. The sense of encroaching evil becomes almost tangible as the player explores the sprawling buildings and the basements of the complex in the dead of night. The whole adventure made me feel that I was taking the lead part in a horror film and I have to admit that, at times, I found the adventure scary! But then I am sure that many players would feel a shiver running down their spines if they were just gingerly picking up a mummified hand then turning in fright as a horrible, black, dribbling creature slammed slowly into the perspex of the dome behind them, scrabbling to get in at them and slowly clawing its way towards the only entrance, and there wasn't even a door to slam in its disgusting putrid leering face.

And it gets worse, for the player has yet to encounter the Zombie-like maintenance man, the evil professor, the slithering, snarling and drooling horror below the basement, the terrible half dead urchins with red broken teeth, blind eyes and dreadful appendages attached to their heads and leading down towards the ultimate horror below!

This is just a sample of what is in store for anyone who dares to investigate the mysterious disappearances of the students at the tech.

I was delighted to find that this is one adventure that doesn't impose a ridiculous time limit on the player. You are left to explore at your leisure and to try to solve the problems and obstacles which are well up to what we have now come to expect from Infocom. Nor does one find oneself dying of hunger, although a bottle of coke is provided to sustain your failing strength now and again. I was also more than delighted not to come across any 'End of Session' messages and so was able to restore my position when I got killed off without the trouble of resetting and reloading the game which is, sadly, one of the objections I have had to some of the Infocom adventures in the past.

The atmosphere is tense and I liked the way that each lurking horror always came as a surprise. This is definitely not one for the faint-hearted but if you, like myself, enjoy an adventure that is out of the ordinary then this is one for you. But do make sure that you keep the lights on if you intend playing far into the night!

The Lurking Horror is a must for every adventurer's collection. I am sure that I am not the only one who was sorry to complete this adventure and I can't wait for more of the same.

Reviewer - Mandy Rodrigues - CBM 64

JHOTHAMIA 6 - David Edgar - Price £2.95 + 40p. P&P

While on a pleasure cruise across the solar system, your ship suddenly went out of control and crash landed on Jhothamia 6. You must find a way off this horrible planet or be forced to live on its barren surface for ever.

Unfortunately there's not a lot I can say about this game. I didn't seem to be able to get into it at all. There are puzzles in it but not too many and not an awful lot of locations either. It seemed a bind to have to put the computer on, so much so that I cheated and sent for a full solution so I could just whiz through it.

The price is far too high, you'd be better off buying me something with the money. I also noticed there were a couple of spelling mistakes which, hopefully, should have been corrected before it was sold, if not, shame on you. No I'm afraid I just can't think of anything else to write, except to say I'm sorry the review had to be bad. But, having said that, you don't have to take my word for it, you could take the chance, you might like it.

Reviewer - SUE BURKE - Spectrum

JHOTHAMIA 6 is available from:

DAVID EDGAR, 1 High Parksail, Erskine, Scotland. PA8 7HY

A WIZARD'S TALE
by Pete Gerrard

I was foolish enough to think that by moving north from London to Wigan I would be able to escape the attentions of my two new companions Strombrigner the Grey and Dimli Gloing, failed wizard and demented dwarf respectively. While they had at least given me an encounter with a troll, and provided a few amusing tales to liven up the evenings, they were not the sort of people to inspire confidence in others if you were seen talking to them. Particularly in a public house where you were not yet established. They couldn't even play pool, more's the pity, for I fancy that Strombrigner could have a trick or two up his sleeve if required, perhaps impersonating his famous Russian snooker playing friend Inoff the Red. They could, however, drink with a vengeance, and it was with some relief that I was able to tick off the passing weeks without there being any sign of them.

My freedom was not to last for long.

I had started to use The Victoria, a large pub near the centre of Wigan, as a peaceful haven for a lunchtime drink. In the evenings it became almost impossible, but at lunchtime it was reasonably quiet with plenty of room to either stand at the bar or sit down, according to the needs of the moment. After a while I had reached the stage where I could easily pass the time of day with the bar staff, exchange a cheery greeting with John the landlord, and talk to a few of the regular customers, I was, in short, being accepted.

One day I was in there at about half past one as usual, standing at the bar and enjoying a quiet pint, when, with my glass halfway to my mouth, I paused. A dry chuckle had caught my attention, and when that was followed by a bony hand resting on my shoulder I knew that my worst fears had been realised.

"'Pon my soul, if it isn't young Master Peter," came the all too familiar voice of Strombrigner the Grey. A grunt from around waist-level indicated that, as usual, he was accompanied by Dimli Gloing. "We have searched high and low for you, lad," continued the wizard, "and are now in need of refreshment. Could you, perhaps, oblige us with a drink?"

With a sigh I finished off my own pint and ordered three more. "Thirsty, are you?" asked the barmaid cheerfully, and then she saw Strombrigner. Dimli, being below bar height, had so far escaped her attention. She looked at the wizard's cloak, the stars peeling off it in places, she looked at his hat, perched at a jaunty angle on top of his head, and said, "We've already had one charity collection today, thank you."

"Charity?" began the wizard, pulling himself up to his full height. "Charity, madam? My dear lady, my companion and I", and here he indicated Dimli, causing the barmaid to peer over the bar and then step hurriedly backwards, "have been searching for Master Peter for quite some time, and are now of thirst. If you would be so kind as to comply with the order?"

Reluctantly she went to the pump and began pouring the first of the three pints, her eyes on the lookout for the landlord. I must admit that I was also keeping an eye out for him, because I knew what he would say as soon as he caught sight of Strombrigner. There was a sign on the door that read "Smart, casual dress only", and the wizard clearly did not fit into that category. Neither did Dimli, come to that, but the wizard was the more remarkable of the two in appearance.

Just as the glasses had been placed in front of us and I'd handed the money over, John the landlord hove into view. "Hello there, all right?" he began, as usual, and then did a double take at the sight of a wizard and a dwarf tucking into two pints of Tetley's bitter. "What the ...?" He was clearly at a loss for words, but Strombrigner wasn't.

"Ah, stout fellow, friend of young Peter's then?"

It was an unfortunate choice of words. "I'm the landlord" replied John, in an ominous tone of voice, "and there's a sign on the door that reads 'smart, casual dress only'."

"Ah yes, we did notice that" said the wizard, "but as I possess no dresses, smart, casual or otherwise, I took that to mean that we were free to enter. And you are the landlord are you, my dear fellow, let me shake your hand, an excellent brew if I may say so."

He put his hand out and John, reluctantly, shook it. He shook his head as well, and looked at me in a dubious sort of way. "Lunchtime only", he said firmly, before walking off towards the kitchen, still shaking his head. We caught a faint "whatever next" as he disappeared from sight.

"Peculiar chap" Strombrigner remarked. "Well lad" he continued grasping my arm, "shall we sit down? We have much to tell, Dimli and I, some remarkable adventures since we last met, indeed, remarkable" and he started to lead me over towards the table, causing a column of accountants to scatter as we approached. The sight of Dimli swinging his axe had that sort of effect on people.

We sat down and the wizard cast his gaze around the pub. "Interesting place" he said, "a mite different from our last meeting point, eh?" This was indeed true, the old wizard had become rather fond of The Narrow Boat, and I was forced to explain my presence in Wigan, forbidding him as I did so to make any jokes about either Wigan or its pier. He seemed shocked at the idea. "My dear chap, nothing could be further from my mind. They do, er, close at three don't they?"

I assured him that they did, and that there were others close at hand that remained open for even longer.

"Cheap too" he commented, regarding his pint with a fond eye. Dimli, I soon realised, would be regarding his empty glass with anything but a fond eye, and I tried to draw the dwarf into the conversation. Never an easy task.

"Well, Dimli, what do you think of it?" I asked him, waving my arm about to encompass the pub in particular and Wigan in general.

My attempt to converse with the dwarf did not meet with the desired result. He finished his drink with little or no apparent effort, looked at the glass, and grunted "Empty. I think it's empty." I couldn't recall ever having heard him use so many words all at once. He fixed a baleful eye on me and was about to open his mouth, when the wizard interrupted with a "my turn, I feel" and rushed off to the bar. I had visions of him bargaining with the barmaid, who still had a look of deep suspicion about her, with frogs and bats and other accoutrements of the trade of wizardry, but somewhere along the way he must have found some money, and he managed to complete the negotiations without any undue incident. As yet I had only drank about a third of my pint, the wizard similar, but Dimli was never one to slow down on anyone else's account, and he started on the fresh glass with the same sort of speed that he'd finished the previous one.

I leant over towards Strombrigner, and whispered in his ear. "Had a hard time of it, has he?", nodding gently in the direction of the dwarf.

"Terrible" Strombrigner whispered back, shaking his head sadly, "terrific battle with a couple of orcs recently."

"Elven lands?" I inquired.

"No, Barclays Bank just up the road aways."

"I didn't know they employed orcs at Barclays."

"Well, they called him an orc-ward customer" grinned the wizard with a delight that, I must confess, I did not share.

"Seriously, what has he been up to?" Dimli must have known we were talking about him, and he kept a beady eye on us both, axe swinging slowly in one hand while the other kept a firm grip of his glass.

"Spot of bother in the caves." Strombrigner took a swig of ale, pinched a cigarette from me and, after doing his usual trick of removing the tobacco from the paper, stuffing it in his pipe and igniting it without any sign of matches or lighter, wore the sort of look that goes with a tale of brave folk and daring deeds. "The caves?" I repeated.

"The caves" came the enigmatic response. "You know, deep underground, near the well house, past the grate, feed the bird to the snake, that sort of thing."

"Oh, those caves." I nodded my head knowingly.

"However, he" and he jerked his head in the direction of the dwarf, "managed to eat the bird and so had to kill the snake himself. To make matters worse there was holiday party there as well, some foreign rabble, Spanish, French, Basques I think they were."

"A holiday party of Basques in the caves?"

"Oh yes, very popular tourist resort these days. Never leave any batteries in the vending machine of course, but most of them think the blessed thing's going to spurt some sort of fizzy drink at them and just throw the batteries away in disgust. True adventurers like ourselves pick them up and carry them around, just in case."

"Have you got any on you now?" I asked him, wondering if the dwarf was ever going to drink at the same sort of speed as the rest of us.

"No, Dimli always carries them. That was part of the trouble really, because he was carrying the food and spices as well. One of the tourists thought he'd stolen them, charged him with a salt and battery, and after that we just didn't get on with them at all."

"Hardly surprising, really."

"No" agreed the wizard, taking a relaxing draw on his pipe and casually blowing a smoke ring round a fruit machine, much to the amazement of the person playing it at the time. "We gave them the stuff back, just to keep the peace, but really. Even their guide wouldn't speak to us much after that, and that absolutely was the cause of the trouble."

"They have a guide as well?"

"Oh yes, wouldn't do to go charging around the caves without a guide, you'd have them falling down chasms, destroying the rickety bridge, and causing untold havoc and chaos. Making the thing generally most unbearable. Quite a nice chap, really, but as I say he wouldn't speak to us after the trouble we were supposed to have caused."

"What was his name?" I inquired.

"Oh, John something or other. Ryan, I think. Anyway, that was what caused all the trouble, and that is why our small friend is feeling very, very thirsty."

"But what was the trouble exactly?" I was being persistent, you had to be with Strombrigner, but I should have known by now that he would tell the tale as he wanted, at his own pace, and at my expense as Dimli finished yet another drink. Out of sympathy for his as yet unknown exploits I bought him another one, wisely leaving myself and the wizard out of things. I was relieved to see that he, at least, was consuming at a sensible rate.

"Well" began the wizard, leaning back, crossing his legs and relaxing, a familiar looking smile creeping onto his face as he did so, "it was a luxury tour. They were - "

"Luxury tour?" I interrupted.

"Yes, they don't all get the same tour, you know. This, as I was saying" he continued sternly, "was a luxury tour. The whole caves, and a pretty hefty price they pay for the privilege as well. You

wouldn't find us paying those sort of prices I can tell you. Honest travellers like ourselves, we're content to collect the odd bar of silver, a platinum pyramid here, a jewelled trident there, that sort of thing."

"Do you have any of those with you?" I asked.

He shifted and looked uncomfortable. "Got a very good price for them" he muttered.

"Harry the Fence?"

"Anyway" said the wizard in a loud voice, indicating the end of that particular topic of conversation, "it was a luxury tour and they get at see the whole caves, which means that absolutely nothing is missed out. Over the bridge, see the bear, get the chain, fool the troll, everything that takes us years to find out, they see in a matter of a few hours. Quite sad really," he added wistfully.

"So what happened?"

"Well, we were in a different part of the caves when we heard it, but they'd just arrived at the point where a deep, sepulchral voice booms around the caves "Caves closing. Exit by main entrance only." Of course, as seasoned explorers we knew exactly what to do, but they, poor deluded foreigners, hadn't a clue, so we thought that despite everything we'd rush over and try and help. Too late of course."

He shook his head sorrowfully, and it was all I could do to control my impatience.

"You see, the guide, must have been fairly new to the job, led them all off to try and get out through the steel grate. No good of course, that exit's blocked off, and the weight of all those tourists must have caused the walls to collapse. It took Dimli over half an hour to free the guide. The tourists, ah well"

He let the sentence trail into nothing, and after a suitable interval had elapsed I prompted him, "... and?"

"And nothing, really, I just explained to the guide the cause of the disaster, and then we left the caves by the official way."

"And what had the guide done wrong?"

"My dear fellow." The wizard turned a smiling face towards me, and said, "All these old, traditional sayings do have their origins somewhere, you know. I told him precisely what he had done wrong. He should never have put all his Basques in one exit!"

A DEFINITION OF ADVENTURING

Adventuring is a license to kill!

Sandra Sharkey - November 1987



SUE'S NEWS

By Bouncing Bunny



(WARNING: There may be some gapped words that may offend)
(If so, send your complaints to Sandra, not me!)

Once again it's time to venture out of my burrow, and let you know what's been happening in my life. Okay, so you think my life's boring, at least you can turn the page over, I can't, I've got to live with me. I drive myself so mad sometimes, I've tried running away from me but I always seem to catch up with me.

Well the school holidays have been and gone and I'm still sane (I think). I managed to get three bedrooms decorated without too many mishaps, I only ran out of paint. No problem I thought, save money by mixing a bit of colour with some of the other paint that was left. Don't ask me what colour I made but it looked like something you'd bring up after a good night out. Talking of which, no, I'd better not. Doing my ceiling was fun, I was standing on the bed, it was like being on a trampoline. I'm mad, I know.

Change of subject and on to superstitions, which I never really believed in until recently. Two full length mirrors got broken in our house recently. (I knew I shouldn't have trusted sellotape on the ceiling.) No, really they just got broken. I admit to helping break one, but I'm not saying how. Anyway that's when things started going wrong, because I was going to tell you about my mice that I bought to go with my gerbils. Except I haven't got any gerbils now 'cos my cats ate them. Go on, you can laugh, I would if it had happened to yours. Well, that was the last straw, I was sick of having my chops nicked as they were on a low light under the grill, white hairs (not mine) over my black skirt and twenty million other things. All right, I'm exaggerating, it was ten million other things, either way they had to go.

Have you ever tried catching five cats and putting them in a box? Honest it's hilarious at the time and even more hilarious later when you can picture yourself climbing under the table. Almost as much fun as dragging out computers to catch an escaped (dropped) mouse, hoping it doesn't run down the gap in the skirting board. Yes, it was me who dropped the mouse. With the cats it was a case of one in, three out, climbing on chairs to reach the one on top of the hob, up and down the stairs (I forgot to shut the door), loads of fun. I'm telling you running a marathon has got nothing going for it compared to catching cats. After what seemed a lifetime we caught them, put them in the car and off we went. We hadn't got far when Debbi (my accomplice) shouted that one was out. Off came my seatbelt and I sort of somersaulted into the back. I caught it, shoved it back in and spent the rest of the journey holding the lid and knocking heads back down. We took them in to the R.S.P.C.A. and said that they were five cats and I didn't want them. By the look on her face I got the impression that she didn't believe us when we said they'd eaten the gerbils, mice, kids, budgies, table, chairs etc., we only went a bit over the top. Anyway she said they'd take them if we left a small donation. Ask who'd left their purse at home!

No problem, I always have loads of change in my coat pockets, so out came my cigs, broken lighter, yo-yo, Snoopy, chip fork, handcuffs, tissue, two figures that came free with Rice Krispies, pen, lipstick, and 1p. I don't know why she looked at me as if I wasn't real, what are pockets for? When she said 'small' I don't think she meant that small, as it was Debbi had a fiver with her so we used that.

But we goes and gets in the car, where I light a cig. That's funny, I thought, looking at it, I'm sure there shouldn't be that much smoke off it. Looked in front of me and calmly said, my car's on fire, realised what I had just said and screams aargh! -h-t! my car's on fire! Luckily it was only the cig lighter that had got jammed. I managed to release it and found out the hard way it was hot. When I say hot I mean swearing hot, so I ended up trying to hold it out of the window. So, breaking mirrors does bring bad luck.

The other saying is 'things come in threes', my gerbils and car is only two. Dare I venture out again I ask myself, the answer is yes, I've just remembered the third thing. Read on.

I went to Blackpool the other day. It was fantastic, no kids, no husband, just me and Debbi. The freedom with all the kids at school now is unbelievable, it doesn't take much getting used to. I thought that after twelve years of changing nappies, toilet training, pushing trolleys and holding little hands, I would be bored. Drop them off at school, come back, do some housework, no-one following behind you tipping it up again, then the rest of the day boring and quiet. No chance. Housework, what's that?

I've been clambering up and over cars in the scrap yard getting bits for Debbi's car, hard work in a tight short skirt, but still a load of fun. But nearly every day. I've even been known to do the odd spot of afternoon drinking, and then there was Blackpool.

I don't think some of the people there were ready for us, they seemed to get slightly embarrassed at what we said. Though I will admit to getting embarrassed a couple of times. As we were getting on one of the rides people were standing there watching us with weird looks on their faces. We never bothered as we're used to it by now, and off we goes. After a bit it suddenly went dark, so we huddled together waiting for this big monster to jump out. It didn't, but this romantic music started up, suddenly we realised we were in the Tunnel of Love. Oh no!! The humiliation of it, so I did my party pieve and clambered over the seat and into the back, the boat was swaying like nothing on earth and I had visions of getting pretty wet. Thinking about it after, changing seats was one of the worst moves, I don't know what they thought we'd been up to in there but their faces were a picture. We almost ran from that ride, but worst was to come.

We decided to go on this thing where you sit in this sort of capsule, and watch a film that makes you think you're actually there. (Ours was a film about the Roller Coaster thing.) Anyway these two lads were trying to make sure they got in the front, so we were going to sit in the back when Debbi decided there was enough room in the front for us as well. By this time the fella was starting to pull the cover down, so I thought I'm becoming an expert at this and climbed over

the seat. Biggest mistake of my life. The poor old fella operating the ride nearly had a heart attack. When it finished, we gets off and because I didn't want to go and make sandpies with this lad he has to go and open his mouth. He starts following us and shouts, "This is Sue and she's got no k-i-k-rs on, so what does a friend do at a time like that, correct!!", starts running away pretending she isn't with me.

We lost them by going on the Ghost Train which was another major disaster as they're now trying to SUE me, just because the ghosts saw me and did a runner. I could tell you about the fun we had in the joke shops, but I've got to keep this pretty clean, so I can't.

We had a laugh with the coppers who were there protecting Maggie, greedy pigs they were (what a pun!), they nicked my chips. Being a police-bunny myself (well I had the hat and handcuffs) I told them they could be arrested for nicking. All they said was "Go on then". Yes, definitely a day to remember. But Blackpool be warned, we've decided to return in a couple of weeks.

Do you know I've even managed to do a bit of adventuring as well, not much. Though I've been having problems with a game called Soho Sex Quest. I think it's something to do with being so naive.

Before I go I'd like some ideas please, I've been invited to a fairytale fancy dress in November, so any suggestions would be much appreciated.

You may or you may not have noticed that I now have a bunny at the heading of Sue's news, thanks very much to Debbi for doing them for me. I was going to do it myself but it turned out to be a cross between a cat, a mouse and a rabbit, so I left it.

Well, I suppose I had better go now, I don't want to, I could go on for pages and pages yet, telling you why I'm sitting here writing this with red hands, but there'd be no mag left. Plus I can't let all this fame go to my head, the amount of headaches I've had by banging my head on the ceiling trying to get to the phone is unbelievable. But I'll be back, nobody gets away from me that easy. Not even the police?

See you, Love Bunny X

SOOTHSAYER

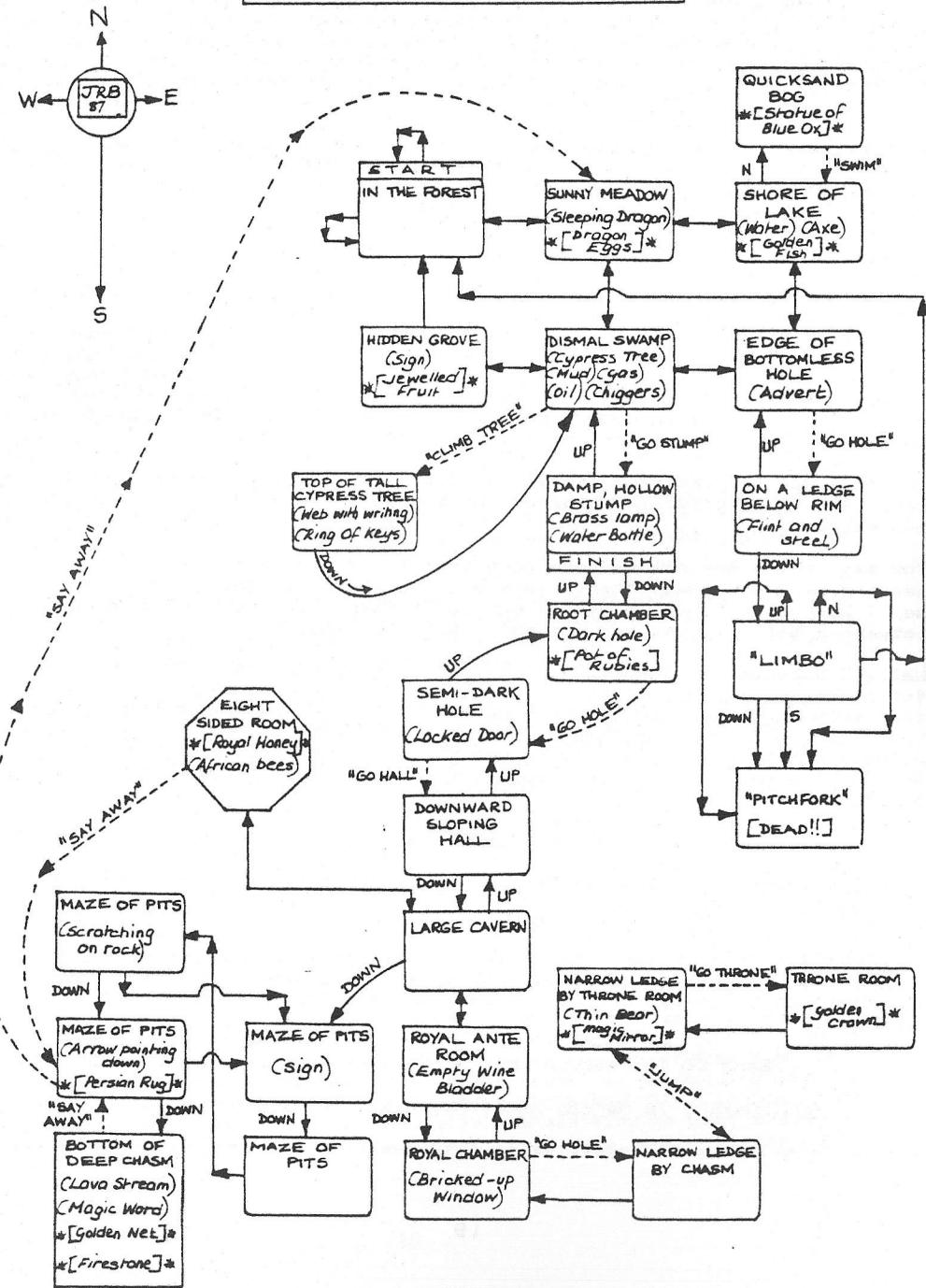
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ADVENTURELAND

DRAWN FOR "PROBE" BY JOHN R. BARNESLEY



IN-TOUCH

Has anyone got a copy of Suspect by Infocom to sell for the Amstrad CPC 6128? Please contact:

TERRY ROBERTS, Woodlands, Church Road, Harrietsham, Kent. ME17 1AP

::

AMSTRAD SOFTWARE (TAPES) FOR SALE:

The Quill; The Illustrator; £4 each or £7.50 for both.

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Phone 0272 856605 to check availability.

MRS. L. WRIGHT, 19 Briar Close, Nailsea, Bristol. BS19 1QG

::

WANTED FOR CBM 64

Has anyone got Time Search, The Odyssey, Island Adventure, Sword of Vhor (all Duckworth), and Rogue Comet (Walrus) for sale or exchange please?

JOHN BARNESLEY, 32 Merrivale Road, Rising Abbot, Stafford. ST17 9EB

::

SOFTWARE FOR SALE

The Pawn - Spectrum - £8.00.

GAC - Commodore 64 (disc) - £15.00.

JACK LOCKERBY, 44 Hyde Place, Aylesham, Canterbury, Kent. CT3 3AL

::

WANTED for Spectrum.

The Seventh Generation (Addison-Wesley)

Please write giving price required to:-

DR.R.A. SPARKS, Cardiff Royal Infirmary, Newport Rd, Cardiff. CF2 1SZ

::

LETTERS

I like John Moore's idea for a convention for "PROBE" readers. I for one would definitely be there. I'd be willing to join a committee to sort something out so if anyone wants to contact me to try and arrange a venue etc. then please do.

I think it would be great to meet the people that write to each other, just like meeting 'old friends'.

MIKE WADE, 18 Woodford Walk, Thornaby-on-Tees,
Cleveland County. TS17 0LT

(I like the idea as well Mike, hope you get some response - Sandra)

::

In Mandy Rodrigues' article for beginners in 'Probe' issue No. 17, I noticed what I believe are two definite errors.

The first is the statement she makes concerning dark locations, she wrote, "Whatever you do DON'T try to move in a dark location".

This is, without doubt, completely incorrect, as there are a vast number of adventures where you MUST move through a dark location to solve the adventure.

The second is, "Don't forget to examine or search things TWICE."

The times you need to examine or search things more than twice are too numerous for me to count, so I will just say that I believe the statement should have read, "Don't forget to examine or search things MORE THAN ONCE".

GRAHAM WHEELER, 2 Burford Close, Southdown, Bath, Avon. BA12 1JF

::

What has happened to all the letters? There was a measly one letter in Issue 17! What's gone wrong? Have people stopped writing? There was a whole 6 pages of letters in Issue 9! I love the letters. They're one of my favourite parts of the magazine. I realise that space is limited and that not everything can get into each issue ... but please, please, please more letters! After all, that was one of the main reasons you started Probe wasn't it ... to let adventurers talk to each other? So, I beg you on my knees ... lots more letters!

JIM O'KEEFFE, 28 Sable Close, Beaver Estate, Hounslow, Middx. TW4 7PE

(I do get a lot of letters that I answer personally, and I know that many of Probe's readers correspond regularly with each other, but if anyone has anything to say that they want printed in the magazine then let me know Sandra)

OBJECTS AND THEIR USES

VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE	(PT.1) - Graham Wheeler.
Lamp	- For light. Used in both parts.
Wellies	- Wear to walk about.
Bomb	- Throw to kill bull.
Penny	- To open door to Wellie Hut.
Red Key	- To open Pillar Box to get you to part 2.
Box	- Contains pellet (open it in room containing a Troll).
Pellet	- Water pellet to overload parser.
Packet	- Contains parser.
Canister	- To stop Jester leaving gallery until 'That Man' comes.
Can (Cheers)	- Calls the bird, to get rid of the python.
Log	- To make a bridge over the chasm.
Bottle	- Fill with water at stream near start to Water Pellet (also used in Part 2).

Rod, Food, Utility Belt, found in Part 1 but used in Part 2.

MONSTERS OF MURDAC - Graham Wheeler

Shawm	- Play shawm to knock down wall, and to get rid of centaur.
Lamp	- To give light (switches itself on and off).
Key	- To lock and unlock door of house.
Plank	- To cross over electric wires.
Rod	- Throw onto wire to activate monster.
Bowl	- To get water, (also a treasure).
Water	- Get water in bowl then LOOK to see a vision.
Wig	- To change your appearance to pass the Troll for the second time.
Beads	- Wave to soothe lion, and wave at cannibals on island.
Thorn	- From lion's paw, to prick doll (dummy) the thorn is also a treasure (tiptip).
Dummy	- Prick doll to get a password when in dungeon.
Staff	- Give to wizard's daughter for a ribbon.
Ribbon	- Wave to cross to Island and give to wizard for a scroll.
Scroll	- Give to wizard's daughter so she can escape.
Toadstone	- Eat it to cure Manticore poison (what is left of it is treasure).
Pillow	- To help protect you from furniture in the Haunted House maze.
Bread	- To feed pigeon so that you can get him.
Bible	- Contains clue on how to leave the island.
Sword	- When asked what you wish to keep, select sword and return it to the lake.

Statuette, Myrrh, Peridots, Ingots, Amethysts, Pieces of Eight, Silver Baboon, Dodo and Flask are all treasures and must be taken to the Keep.

SPELLBREAKER - Graham Wheeler

Liskon serpent to make it shrink small enough to let you past. Snavig grouper to reach its nest. Caskly moldy book to read a spell. Give fragment (of lava) to Green Eyed Rock to go for a ride. To get the cube from the idol's mouth, use Malyon then Espnis spells. To get the cube from the Roc's nest you need a magic carpet.

PRINCE OF TYNDAL - J. R.

Give the BOOK to the ALCHEMIST for a potion. Get the villagers to follow you (SAY FOLLOW) to the cabin then SAY STAY. Give the JEWEL to the MAGPIE then LOOK and REMOVE CORK and POUR POTION on the mushroom for a HELMET. Plug the HELMET with the CORK (INSERT CORK). DIG in the sand with your SPADE for a vase. CAST the spell to avoid Eldin (INVISIBILITY).

CASTLE EERIE - J. R.

Read the BOOK to learn of a secret passage! READ the NEWSPAPER to find out what is going on. WAIT on the landing for the guard to leave. BREAK the cupboard to locate a hammer. LAY PLANK to get to the Circular Room beyond the rotting floorboards. LAY the BOARD between the tablets to pass the beams. In the control room the GREEN lever operates the lights and also the lifts. The BLUE lever switches the alarm on and off at the castle door. HANG COAT on the surveillance camera. WEAR BOOTS to cross the grid. EXTEND the ladder before LAYing it to gain access to the panelled alcove. This is ONE WAY as the ladder subsequently slips down the hole!!

STAR WRECK - J. R.

To save wasting time you can ignore all the following items: Safe. Flask. Vent in Leisure Hall - you can't open or enter it! Everything in the Dining Hall. Tri-Coder in Decoy's Room. Device in Engineering Sector 7. Pods in Transfer Room. Wire and Plug in Engineering Sector 3. Socket in Generator Room. Fire Hose in A-Deck Sector 7.

Although you can play about with most of these items they serve no apparent purpose in the fulfillment of your quest - whatever it is!!!

(Anybody get anywhere with Leiu Yahoo???)

CURSE OF SHALETH - J. R. (This one's for Allan Shortland!!!)

At start: LOOK BODY, GET AMULET, WEAR AND EXAMINE IT, (half WOLF - half BIRD), input FLOW then BREAK CRYSTAL, R - until the spell wears off. GET EYE and examine it - allows you to read RUNES. NORTH then WEST and THROW EYE. Change to a bird (DRIB) then FLY. DOWN nd once again R - until this spell wears off. EXAMINE the BUST and you'll be able to understand the runes. WEAR the sheet from the bed. GO N, N, E, S, E, S then SIT and GET the BOTTLE and EXAMINE IT. Now DRINK POTION then FOLLOW (until you arrive outside the City gates.) When chained to a wall DRIB to free yourself. SEARCH the prisoner and UNLOCK CHAIN.

MOTORCYCLE CRAZY - J. R.

1. To inflate flat tyre with pump - PUMP UP.
2. Answer to motorway question is 70.

PUB QUEST - J. R.

1. Outside the shed - THROW SLAB (to make a hole in the shed).
2. At minefield also THROW SLAB to detonate mines in your way!

RINGS OF MERLIN - J. R.

1. In the dungeon - TUG WALLS.

SECRET OF LITTLE HODCOME - J. R.

1. To get MISTLETOE - LAY PLANK, WALK PLANK, CLIMB TREE, GET MISTLETOE, DOWN TREE, WALK PLANK.

TEMPLE OF TERROR - J. R.

1. The skeleton - STRIKE with cannonball then GET NET.
2. The lizard man - CAST INCENDIARY AT LIZARD then GET IRON KEY.
3. The glowing moth - CAST SHRINK AT MOTH then CARRY it to use in the Windy Room.

TOMB OF XEIOPS - J. R.

1. To get coconut - SHAKE TREE (Twice!)

WIZARD OF OZ - J. R.

After examining the bushes outside the house! - TELL GLINDA ABOUT HOME then ASK GLINDA ABOUT EMERALD CITY.

THESEUS PT.1

To go to Hades and free Pirithous you need the coin, the drugged carcase, the vase of smoking liquid. At the bank of the river of the dead 'GIVE COIN TO FERRYMAN, W, GET TORCH, W, GIVE CARCASE TO CERBERUS, W, S, GET TABLET, SE, S, NE, E, SW, FREE PIRITHOUS, NE, W, SW, N, NW, N, E, N, E, E.....' You will be taken back to the river of the dead.

THESEUS PT.2

The route through the labyrinth is (from the entrance to the labyrinth), IN, W, W, SE, E, SE, SW, E, S, SW, SW, W, N, N, SE, NE, W, NW, N, E, S to the centre and the Minotaur. To get out simply repeat the above in reverse.

NYTHYHEL PT.1

To buy a ticket at the station you need some coins. At the machine 'INSERT COIN, TYPE OAKHAMPTON, GET TICKET, N, GIVE TICKET TO GUARD, E, E, BOARD TRAIN, WAIT, WAIT.....'

NYTHYHEL PT.2

To drive van from farmyard 'ENTER VAN, INSERT KEY, TURN KEY, DRIVE VAN.' To get more money you need the brooch. In the pawnshop 'GIVE BROOCH TO COHEN, NO, YES.' To pass the procession, at the western edge of the cavern by the large stone, 'HIDE, WATCH, WATCH, WATCH, WATCH.....'

GETTING YOU STARTED

SHIPWRECK - J. R.

E, E, D, S, S, TIDY CABIN, LOOK, GET TIE, WEAR TIE, GET MONEY, N, N, U, S, S, S, W, S, BUY MEAL, EAT MEAL (waiter clears table and drops something), LOOK, GET OPENER, N, N, GET TOWEL, S, S, W, S, (you slip into the pool and are taken to the Sick Bay), REST, W, EXAMINE BOTTLES, GET ASPIRIN, E, N, W, S, E, N, GET NEWSPAPER, READ NEWSPAPER, (for the name of the captain), DROP NEWSPAPER, BUY DRINK, TIP BARMAN, GET BOTTLE, OPEN BOTTLE, DRINK BEER, DROP OPENER, S, S, E, S, S, S, S, MOVE CUSHIONS, GET KEY (you need a bottle of oil from the oil store before you can use that key!!).....

SPELLBREAKER - Graham Wheeler

NOTES

1. Learn spells several times as it may take more than one attempt to 'cast' a spell.
2. If you go 'down' too early from the packed earth room the Giant Roc won't catch you, so don't try to shorten the first part of the solution.
3. Write on each cube to identify it, for convenience in this solution, I use letters from the alphabet.
4. For quickness I will just write 'learn' and 'cast' once, even though several attempts may be needed.
5. To cancel 'Frotz' spell on self 'EXTINGUISH SELF'.

From the start in the Council Chamber:

Wait, (until all the other Guild Members turn into newts etc.), S, S, Learn Lesoch, Lesoch cloud, get cube, n, get fish, get bread, write "A" on cube (with magic burin), Learn Blorples, Blorples "A" cube (you will be transported), Frotz self, e, s, get zipper, examine zipper, open zipper, reach inside hole, empty zipper, get flimsy scroll (Grgol spell), Learn Blorples, Blorples "A" cube, s, get dirty scroll, examine dirty scroll, Gnusto Throck, u, d, d, Learn Blorples, Blorples "A" cube, w, s, u, d, w, n, (you see an Ogre with Hay Fever), s, Learn Blorples, Blorples "A" cube, d, (you will be stopped first time), d, wait, (you will be picked up by a Giant Roc) wait, (until it drops you in its nest), get stained scroll, examine stained scroll, Gnusto Caskly, Learn Blorples, Blorples "A" cube, s, u, (keep typing up until you are told you must do something about the rockfall or die), Cast Grgol, (you can now climb up boulders), u, u, u, u, get coin, w, get cube (the Hermit will stop you), Learn Caskly, Caskly Hut, get cube, put coin in zipper, put "A" cube in zipper, put knife in zipper, put bread in zipper, put fish in zipper, write "B" on cube, put burin in zipper, Learn Blorples, Blorples "B" cube, s, get plant (twice), Learn Blorples, put "B" cube in zipper, get "A" cube from zipper, Blorples "A" cube, w, Learn Throck, n, plant weed, Throck weed, (this makes the Ogre sneeze so much you can pass him), d, get dusty scroll, examine dusty scroll, Gnusto Espnis, get box, examine box, (note the runes on the box, they change if you put a different cube inside), put "A" cube in zipper, open box, get cube, put box in zipper, get burin from zipper, write "C" on cube, put burin in zipper, Learn Blorples, Blorples "C" cube, Learn Blorples, get bread from zipper, drop all but the bread, s, (you are in the ocean), drop bread (a grouper eats it), get cube, get bottle, Blorples "C" cube, get all, open bottle, get damp scroll, examine damp scroll, Gnusto Liskon

FORGOTTEN CITY (H.A.W.K.) - J. R.

DROP KEY, N, IN, N, NE, NE, UP, IN, HELP, FLICK SWITCH, OUT, E, IN (RAMSAVE as you step off the shuttle and wander about until you locate a drunk who drops an ID badge. Take it and wear it, then return to City End), SE, E, E, S, S, E, E, S, S, S, GET COINS, E, E, E, SE, GET PLANK, NW, W, W, W, S, S, S, W, GET BERRIES, E, SE, E, CUT OVERGROWTH, DROP MACHETE, IN, S, PUT PLANK, S, EXAMINE SKELETON, GET BONE, D, GET IDOL (the snake bites you!), EAT BERRIES, UP, N, N, OUT, W, NW, N, N, W, NW, SW, S, EXAMINE APERTURE.....

ANGELIQUE (A GRIEF ENCOUNTER) - Graham Wheeler

Get holdall, remove shoes, remove stockings, get stockings, examine stockings (ladder), wear stockings, get shoes, wear shoes, up, w, get canoe, e, e, get machette, n, d, s, get opener, s, get rope, n, n, u, s, w, w, d, w, get gamp, n, get spectacles, wear spectacles, e, use rope (tie to cliff), w, s, e, u, e, e, n, d, s, s, s, open gamp, e, n, e, get jeans, remove skirt, wear jeans, n, get chute, wear chute, get diary, read diary, drop diary, w, n, get key, s, e, s, w, s, e, s, w, drop canoe, use canoe, e, get coat, wear coat, w, get spade, s, s, use machette, drop machette.....

STAR-WRECK - J. R.

GET PHASER, GET COMMUNICATOR, W, W, S, W, UP, UP, W, TELL ZULU TO FLY SHIP, E, (there is now a power failure preventing you from using the lift!), E, E, E, E, TRANSPORT TO GENERATOR (now you are on the Engineering Deck), REPAIR GENERATOR, N, N, E, GET LEAD, E, SMASH TANK, (the Trell escapes), RELEASE BEAST, W, W, W, N, SMASH DOOR, S, W, W, GET COFFIN, LINE COFFIN WITH LEAD, E, U, E, E, PUT KRALL IN COFFIN, (the tannoy should now announce that you are in orbit around Alpha Trica III), PLAY RECORD, W, W, U, U, E, E, E, E, DROP COFFIN, TRANSPORT COFFIN, W, W, W, D, D, E, E, OPEN HYDRANT, GET TRELLS, W, W, D, W, ENTER SHUTTLE, DROP TRELLS, D, JETTISON SHUTTLE, E, E, E, E, GET CRYSTAL, W, W, W, U, U, U, (you must now explore the Command Deck and locate the Slime Beast. When you do, because of a minor bug, you must input 'FEED CRYSTAL' then 'BEAST' and it works!! LOOK and TAKE the "now pulsating" crystal).....

CURSED BE THE CITY - Graham Wheeler

Scream, examine torturer, get dagger, get bottle, get chalice, up, n, get lamp, s, e, climb tree, n, d, w, w, n, give wine to priest, climb altar, d, w, wait, wait, wait (until all clear), e, e, get cube, d, s, turn black (handle), w, w, d, n, nw, examine cocoon, cut cocoon, get armour, wear armour, s, n, e, se, examine priest, get staff, wave staff, get mask, wear mask, nw, w, s, s, w, w, w, w, s, s, w, s, w, s, w, s, examine dead plant, get arrow, examine spiny plant (must be wearing the armour), get crossbow.....

CASTLE OF THE SKULL LORD - J. R.

N, CLIMB TREE, TAKE HIVE, D, S, E, E, WAKE BEAR, GIVE HIVE (receive silver key), W, W, S, TAKE SAW, N, N, CUT TREE, TAKE OAR, S, E, S, ENTER BOAT, ROW BOAT, S, E, TAKE SPADE, D, TAKE COIN, U, W, ENTER BOAT, ROW BOAT, N, DROP OAR, W, W, S, S, DIG SNOW, W, OPEN DOOR, N, E, TAKE BONE, W, S, E, N, N, E, N, N, E, E, BUY HOOK, W, W, W, KILL DOG, WITH BONE, DROP BONE, E, DROP HOOK, S, S, W, S, S, (this location always has to be dug out as snow is continually falling!), DIG SNOW, W, W, TAKE ARMOUR, WEAR ARMOUR, E, OPEN DOOR, N.....

SERIALISED SOLUTIONS
PLANETFALL - Ron Rainbird

Part 3.

SEARCH LAB. UNIFORM, TAKE TELEPORTATION CARD, PAPER AND NEW BATTERY, READ PAPER AND NOTE THE NUMBER, DROP PAPER, N, W, N, E, SLIDE TELEPORTATION THROUGH SLOT, PRESS BEIGE BUTTON, LOOK, if in need of sustenance, OPEN CANTEEN, DRINK LIQUID, DROP CANTEEN, GET BEDISTOR AND PLIERS, SLIDE TELEPORTATION THROUGH SLOT, PRESS TAN BUTTON, W, N, N, OPEN CUBE, GET FUSED BEDISTOR WITH PLIERS, DROP FUSED BEDISTOR AND PLIERS, INSERT GOOD BEDISTOR IN CUBE, S, W, W, N, "FLOYD, GO NORTH", "FLOYD, GET FROMITZ BOARD", UP, E, N, OPEN PANEL, GET SECOND BOARD, DROP FRIED BOARD, INSERT SHINY BOARD IN SOCKET, CLOSE PANEL, S, W, SW, SE, E, E, SE, OPEN BIO-LOCK DOOR, SE, E, LOOK through window, Floyd makes a suggestion, OPEN DOOR, CLOSE DOOR, WAIT, OPEN DOOR, CLOSE DOOR Floyd dies!, GET CARD, W, OPEN DOOR, W, W, N, E, SLIDE TELEPORTATION THROUGH SLOT, PUSH BEIGE, GET CANTEEN, W, W, W, N, GO TO BED when tired, SLEEP, GET UP, GET ALL, S, W, S, DROP COMPUTER OUTPUT, GET KITCHEN ACCESS CARD, SLIDE KITCHEN ACCESS THROUGH SLOT, DROP KITCHEN ACCESS, S, PUT CANTEEN UNDER SPOUT, PRESS BUTTON, CLOSE CANTEEN, GET CANTEEN, N, N, E, E, OPEN CANTEEN AND DRINK LIQUID if required, E, E, DROP CANTEEN if liquid drunk, SLIDE TELEPORTATION THROUGH SLOT, PRESS TAN BUTTON, DROP TELEPORTATION CARD, GET LASER, PUT NEW BATTERY IN LASER, W, S, S, S, SLIDE MINIATURIZATION THROUGH SLOT, then type the number noted previously from the paper, E, N, N, LOOK IN RELAY, SET LASER TO 1, FIRE LASER AT SPECK, keep firing until speck is vapourised, S, giant spider appears, SET LASER TO 6, FIRE LASER AT MONSTER, keep firing until laser is hot then THROW LASER OVER EDGE, S, W, N, OPEN DESK, GET GAS MASK, WEAR GAS MASK, PUSH RED BUTTON, OPEN DOOR (the nightmare chase begins), W, OPEN LAB DOOR, W, W, OPEN BIO-LOCK, W, RUN WEST, RUN SOUTH, RUN WEST, RUN SOUTH, PUSH BUTTON, WAIT until door opens, N and full(?) explanation.

END OF GAME WITH RANK OF GALACTIC OVERLORD.

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INFIDEL - Ian M.

Part 2.

OK, now we're going to visit the Barge Room and its environs. Head along South to the landing and continue down to the Narrow Hall. From there, go NE and then NW and you are in the Barge Chamber. You will be visiting the barge itself in a short while; for the moment, go West, then North, then East and you will be behind the Barge where a hallway starts. Go all the way North along this hallway to the Inner Chamber. Ignore the corpse, which is wearing a jewelled ring. The ring is not treasure in the game (no points for getting it) and is in fact a deadly trap, so it's best not to touch it! From the Inner Chamber go West to the Golden Room and then South to the Golden Alcove. Pick up the Gold Chalice, then return to the Inner Chamber, then East to the Silver Room, South to the Silver Alcove. Pick up the silver chalice and return to the Barge. Once in the Barge Chamber, go back to the front of the boat. Enter it by going North. You are in the middle of the barge and there is a mast here. Go East into the Aft Cabin, Down into the hold, then West into the West End of the hold. Here the mast ends in a slot. If you look in the slot you will see a piece of wood (called a "shim") wedged in the slot to hold the mast in place.

Get the shim and drop it. Return to the deck and get the beam. If you like, you can go West to enter the Fore Cabin to read the little scroll of hieroglyphics, although that isn't necessary. Go back to the Chamber of Ra. From there go East into the Cube Room, then West, then South. You will be in front of a panel with some bricks in it. Remove and drop the First, Third and Fifth bricks. When you remove the fifth one a secret passageway to the East will open. Go through it to the Turning Passage, then down to the bottom of the stairs. Use our pick to dig the plaster away from the door, then go West through the Narrow Passage until you come to the room with the two niches. Here's where the fun starts. Put the beam in the niches, then stand on it. Dig away the plaster with your axe. As you do so the floor will fall away! Since you're standing on the beam, you're safe. Okay, now open the door and go West into the Antechamber. Since there are still a few other sneaky things to avoid, get the beam then go South. This is another antechamber with a door in the west wall. Of course, there is also a trap here for the unwary so put the beam in the door. Now you can open the door safely. Go West into the Slab Room. (Note: somewhere along the line here your torch will start to splutter. When that happens, get the jar and the matches from your pack. Light a match then turn off the torch and dip it in the oil. Your match will go out, but you will then have time to light another one so you can light the torch. After this you can leave the jar and matches because you are near the end of the game and won't need them anymore). Here is a slab with holes in each of its four corners. In fact, the placement of the holes is very reminiscent of the Circular Room. So, drop the pack and take out the four jewelled clusters (the gold one you can leave in there). Now, put the clusters in the Slab as follows: Diamond in the First Hole; Ruby in the Second Hole; Emerald in the Third Hole; Opal in the Fourth Hole. As each one is inserted into its hole there will be a click from the slab. Once the last cluster is in place you can raise the slab. Inside you will find a golden spatula and a book. Get the book. The spatula can be left in the slab, unless you want to read the hieroglyphics in the book (you need the spatula to turn the pages). In any case, you have what you came for, so pick up the pack and go East back to the Antechamber and get the beam. Now go North twice to the Antechamber with the timbered door. As you may have guessed, this door is also trapped. Put the beam under the timber, then break the seal on the door. (That beam certainly comes in handy!). Now, open the door and go North into the Burial Chamber then East into the Treasury where the scales are. You must balance the scales to be exactly even with the table top in order to safely take the scarab. So, drop the sack and get the two chalices. Put the Gold Chalice on either side of the scales. Fill the silver chalice with water and put it on the other scale. Now you can get the scarab. Return to the Burial Chamber. Place the book in the large recess and the scarab in the small recess. There will be a click from the statues that hold the sarcophagus cover in place. Now, turn the statues in the following order: Neith, Selkis, Isis, Nephthys. At this point you have your perfect score. If you continue the game by opening the sarcophagus you will die; there is no way around that. You can also go back to the surface through the stairs in the Chamber of Ra, but all you can do then is wander around in the desert. Of course, you can quit the game here and receive your Master Adventurer rating!

CONGRATULATIONS! You've finished INFIDEL.

Part 2

Back in the foyer once more I headed east through a long hall and into the parlour. As soon as I saw the grand piano I kicked myself hard for not thinking of the connection straight away! This was where I should play 'Feelings'! I immediately opened up the piano and collected the violet coloured punch card which fell out of it and put it with the yellow one for future consideration. As I picked out the notes of 'Feelings' I heard a strange noise and saw to my astonishment that a large trapdoor had opened up in the centre of the floor!

I was down that hole in a flash to explore. I pride myself that it only took a moment to realise what the problem was all about. Now I knew why all the furniture in the parlour had been bolted to the floor, all except the piano. I went back up through the hole in the floor and pushed the piano northwards as far as I could and then popped back down the hole. Heading south I came to a dirty pillar which was inserted into a niche in the ceiling. I removed it and dropped it on the floor. Now I returned to the piano and pushed it to the south end of the room. As I did this I nearly overbalanced as the floor began to tilt alarmingly to the south. I managed to get back down the hole and removed and discarded the dusty pillar below the north end of the floor and, lo and behold, I found that a passage through to the north was revealed! What I was expecting to find as I crawled through the passage I don't know, but it certainly wasn't a parking meter! Here, believe it or not, was my second treasure! I collected it and managed to get it back to the foyer with me.

I carried my two treasures with great pride west into the living room and dumped them on the sofa. I looked round the room. There really wasn't much to see apart from three statuettes on the mantle over the fireplace. The fireplace! That surely was worth investigating. In I went and shone my flashlight round. I found a loose brick and pulled it free. Yet another punch card floated out, this time an indigo coloured one. As I was in the fireplace I decided I had better investigate the chimney. My hands were too full for climbing so I dropped everything but the flashlight and began to climb up the chimney. It was a long climb, but eventually I reached the top and climbed out to the roof. The view was spectacular to say the least! I could see for miles.

There was another chimney at the other end of the roof so I gingerly made my way across to it and climbed down. I couldn't go very far down as the chimney was blocked but I did find a large stuffed penguin which pleased me greatly because it proved to be my third treasure! Back across the roof I went with my prize and down the first chimney to the fireplace again. I collected the oddments which I had dropped there and, entering the living room again, I deposited the penguin with the other treasures.

Those statues on the mantle were still puzzling me. One of them was holding up its right hand with three fingers held up, another, curiously, was holding seven fingers up with its left hand, and the last one was holding up five fingers with its right hand. Oh well, perhaps the puzzle would become clear in time.....

CUTTHROATS
(Sailing on the Night Wind)
by Mandy Rodrigues

I lay on my bed in my room at the Red Boar Inn and, as the last remnants of sleep left me, memories came flooding back and I sat up quickly. The terrible events of the last few days rushed back and I was once more filled with a deep sadness.

To witness the murder of my friend was bad enough, but to know that his unknown attacker would very likely get off scot free was much worse. The police here on Hardscrabble Island were not a dedicated bunch at the best of times.

I got up and my eyes fell immediately on a note which had been slipped under my door sometime during the night. It was from Johnny Red and the contents were interesting to say the least - "If I wanted to learn something of interest I was to meet him at the Shanty at 8.30 a.m."

I checked my watch and carefully wound it, I saw I still had plenty of time. I went as usual to check that the Shipwreck Book was still hidden in my dresser, I knew it was vital to keep it hidden because someone had been murdered for it already. I took my key and my Mariners Trust Passbook from the dresser and went out of my room, being very careful to lock the door behind me.

I stepped out onto Wharf Road and breathed deeply of the fresh salty air and set off east towards the Shanty. As I passed McGinty's Salvage Office I shuddered as my dislike of the man assailed me and I hurried on passing the Weasel on the way. That is another man that I don't like either, I can't seem to trust the shifty looking character at all, however I exchanged a quick greeting with him and hurried into the Shanty.

Johnny Red was already there standing at the bar with Pete the Rat. I sat and talked to him but he refused to tell me anything until the Weasel arrived so I passed the time by ordering a meal and a glass of water. I find that other drinks in the Shanty don't seem to quench one's thirst so much and anyway they cost too much money. After I had finished my meal the Weasel joined us and we got down to business.

Johnny said that he was planning an operation that could bring us a fortune but this would need backers. The wiley thing had got wind of the fact that I had some money stashed away so he thought I would be the ideal person to include in the deal. When he asked if I was interested I immediately said "Yes."

It had gone rather quiet in the Shanty and Johnny glanced round nervously, our little gathering seemed to be causing some unwelcome interest among the regulars so Johnny whispered, "Look, we can't talk about it here, we will meet again at 9.30 a.m. by the lighthouse," he looked at me, "meanwhile make sure that McGinty doesn't get wind of what we are about or the deal will be off!"

At this point we separated and I went back to Wharf Road to think about what had just occurred. I realised that I would need some money today to show my goodwill so, instead of waiting for later, I headed for the Mariners Trust on the south side of the island as quickly as I could. The bank opened at 9 a.m. and I knew that McGinty would be out and about shortly after then so, as soon as it opened, I took my Passbook and withdrew \$603 (which left nothing in my account).

As I came out I realised that, if McGinty should see me carrying my passbook he would suspect that something was up so I looked around quickly for some place to hide it. I remembered the lookout point which was just nearby and would be the very place! I quickly made my way to the lookout, dropped my passbook and, trying to look as unconcerned as possible, set off along Ocean Road, turned into Wharf Road and headed swiftly to the western end where I knew the Winding Road would lead me to the lighthouse.

I arrived just in time. Johnny was already waiting there and Pete followed closely on my heels. As usual we had to wait for Weasel to arrive before we could get down to business.

"Take a look at this," Johnny said and produced a large Dinner Plate from somewhere about his person, "I know this is from an unexplored wreck." I examined the plate closely and saw that it had 'Hollywood Cruise Line' markings on it. I knew immediately, from my study of the Shipwreck Book the precise location and depth of the wreck but I wasn't going to tell them anything yet. I didn't trust them at all!

"I plan to Captain our vessel, Pete will be cook, the Weasel will crew and I want you to use your expert diving experience to explore the wreck. All I need from you is the Latitude and Longitude of the wreck and to see the colour of your money to show your goodwill," Johnny told me, "I want us all to meet again at the Shanty at 11.45 a.m." Then he turned and murmured to me "I will meet you alone first at the lookout at 10.45 a.m. Bring the money with you and we will talk then."

Looking at my watch I realised that there wasn't much time to spare and I was glad that I had thought to get my money earlier. I headed back towards Wharf Road and began to make my way along it. As I passed McGinty's office again I had an uneasy feeling. Perhaps it would be better to take a look around before I met Johnny.

Next to McGinty's Place there was a vacant lot which I could cut through to reach the Back Alley which ran behind McGinty's Salvage, so I quickly ran through there and arrived outside McGinty's back door. I cautiously peeped in through the window and there, sitting at his desk, was McGinty smoking one of his usual fat, smelly cigars. 'Perhaps it would be a good thing to watch him for a while' I thought to myself and settled down to wait.

From time to time I glanced through the window just to make sure that he was still there. I waited for a long time and, as I was just thinking about giving up and heading for my meeting with Johnny, I noticed that McGinty was leaving his office! I checked the time and saw that it was 10.20 a.m.

I knew the route of McGinty's favourite morning walk and I calculated that, all being well, I could time it just right so that he wouldn't see me at all.

I moved a couple of places east along the alley until I was standing behind the Marine Outfitters store and waited with wildly beating heart for the right amount of time to pass. I knew that McGinty would stay on the Shore Road until 10.36 and calculated that, if I left my present spot at exactly 10.38 a.m. I would be all right.

At exactly 10.38 I set off east to the middle of Ocean Road. I glanced about and was overjoyed to find no McGinty in sight! Phew!

I hurried to the lookout point and arrived breathless but still on time, to find Johnny waiting for me. I tried to give him the money but he refused with a smile, "No matey," he said, "I just wanted to see the colour of it." I was beginning to like and trust Johnny Red more and more by the minute. "All I am going to need to know from you just now is whether our wreck is more than 200 feet down because if it is we will have to charter the Mary Margaret." I quickly assured him that our wreck was less than 200 feet down and we agreed that the vessel 'The Night Wind' would be ideal for our purpose. With that agreed Johnny asked me to accompany him to the Outfitters to equip ourselves with all that we would need.

We walked along chatting in a friendly way until we reached the Outfitters Shop. But, as we entered, our faces fell as we saw McGinty there, leaning on the counter chatting with the salesman. Johnny and I exchanged quick worried glances and waited. McGinty seemed in no hurry to leave and I was loth to speak at all with him there. Johnny must have felt the same because he leaned over and whispered in my ear "Let's wait until he leaves before we do or say anything!"

We had to wait for quite some time, with Johnny silently glaring hatred at McGinty, before he finally sidled off and left us to our business. Then Johnny wasted no time in ordering everything he thought we would need and arranging for it all to be delivered to the Night Wind just before high tide. He was a little short of money and asked me if I would pay the rest of what he owed when I ordered the things that I thought I would need for the trip. Then he left me, after getting my assurance that I would be on the boat in time to supervise the unloading of our supplies and that I would guard them until he arrived.

I studied the price list and finally decided that I should order a C-battery, the portable compressor, a tube of putty, a flashlight, a can of shark repellent and a rather expensive Electromagnet. Having paid for these items and the balance of Johnny's account I left the shop.

I had plenty of time before high tide so I returned to my room at the Red Boar and collected my diving equipment from the closet. Making sure that my door was locked, I wandered outside once more and headed towards the Shanty in good time for the 11.45 meeting with Johnny and the others. I entered the Shanty and made sure that I sat with Johnny because I didn't want to miss any of the conversation.

I was feeling quite thirsty so while we waited for the Weasel to settle down with us I ordered a glass of water and had another meal.

In due course I heard Johnny tell the others that the deal was on and that they were to be at the boat at high tide which would be about 2.00 p.m. I don't know why it was, but I glanced at the Weasel and caught a strange expression on his face at that point and I didn't like it. I had no proof of anything, of course, but I couldn't help feeling rather uneasy.

Almost immediately the Weasel stood up and left the Shanty and on a sudden impulse I decided to follow him and see what he was up to. I followed Weasel carefully as he made his way southeast on to Ocean Road and then turned southwest and walked swiftly along Shore Road towards the Ferry Landing. I spotted McGinty ahead of us waiting at the Landing and when I saw Weasel go up to him and the two of them become engrossed in hushed conversation I was blazing angry, but not at all surprised. The little traitor was ratting on us to McGinty!

I couldn't get any nearer to them without them seeing me and I watched in angry frustration as Weasel slipped something into McGinty's hand before slipping onto the Ferry just before it sailed for the mainland. I looked carefully at McGinty but he had secreted the object somewhere on his person so I was none the wiser. I just had to find out what Weasel had passed to him otherwise it could mean big trouble for us all!

I ran as fast as I could back to Ocean Road and slipped quickly into the Alley. I hurried west until I reached the rear of McGinty's office and there I crouched beneath the window, with pounding heart, to await events. I was very worried indeed. The fate of us all and our well laid plans now hung in the balance. The matter of our life or death was in McGinty's grubby little hands. If he had proof of the deal then the game was well and truly up! If only I could get a sight of whatever it was that McGinty had. I knew perfectly well that Johnny wouldn't believe my story unless I had the proof.

When finally I heard McGinty return to his office I peeped in through the window and saw him sitting at his desk holding what looked like an envelope! I simply had to do something before high tide. I glanced at my watch and saw that it was lunchtime. Good! McGinty was a greedy fat little pig and wouldn't miss his lunch for anything. I was right, sure enough within a few moments he left his office and headed off to the Shanty. I knew his habit of gobbling down his food so I knew I hadn't any time to spare.

I quickly pushed open the window and slipped inside his office and made my way straight to his cluttered desk. There was the envelope lying on top and I grabbed it and examined it and its contents in excitement! It was Weasel's Mariners Trust Passbook and a message giving details of our plan and ample evidence of the Weasel's betrayal!

I scrambled out of the window and once more waited outside for McGinty's return. I knew I couldn't wander about before he returned safely to his office or he would see what I held!

As I waited I thought of what course of action I should take. If I went straight to Johnny with the envelope I knew he would call the deal off immediately because there was no time to find a suitable person to take Weasel's place. No, by far the best course would be for me to wait until we were out to sea before I handed it over to Johnny.

As soon as McGinty returned to his office and I saw him once more seated at his desk I went through the vacant lot to Wharf Road and north onto the Wharf itself.

The Night Wind was bobbing gently up and down at her moorings to the west of the Wharf and I went aboard to take a look around.

I explored the upper decks and then went below. From the Captain's Cabin in the stern through the little lounge, galley, crews quarters to the stores locker at the prow end, all was spick and span and ready. After taking a quick glance around the engine room I returned above to the starboard deck to wait for the delivery of our stores.

At 1.50 p.m. the delivery boy pushed his loaded cart on board and I followed him aft, down and forward, watching him drop off the foodstuffs in the gally and following him into the store while he unloaded the gear. Everything was here.

I opened the panel of the drill and put the C-battery inside and closed it firmly. I filled my air tanks with the compressor and went south to the crews quarters.

The Weasel would be coming on board directly and I didn't want him to see the envelope! He is a cunning individual and I knew that I must choose a hiding place with great care. I found the very place under the mattress on my bunk and slipping the envelope under it I walked through the galley and lounge to the Captain's cabin to find Johnny.

He was there and looked up expectantly as I entered. I was itching to tell him about the Weasel but restrained myself. Instead I told him that the Latitude was 25 degrees and the Longitude was also 25 degrees. He repeated this to make sure and then told me that we would be sailing shortly and that I should get some rest. I didn't feel at all like resting but I knew that my bunk would be the best place to be for other reasons!

Pete was in the galley preparing some kind of stew but I didn't have time to stop and chat as I spied the Weasel going through to the crews quarters and hurried along behind him. I lay down on my bunk and chatted to him for a while, watching him casting furtive glances out of the corner of my eye. Well, he wasn't going to get a chance to search the bunk when I was lying on it that was sure, so I think he decided to give up as I showed no signs of moving and after a while he wandered away.

I felt the Night Wind get under way and the rocking of the boat lulled me into a deep and refreshing sleep. I was surprised to find it was late afternoon when Johnny shook me awake and told me that we were now anchored above the site of the wreck.

"Get yourself ready and then you can start the dive," he smiled in a friendly way as he left.

The Weasel was nowhere to be seen so I got out of the bunk, slipped into my wet suit, flippers and tank and, taking the envelope and my mask, I went into the store and collected everything but the compressor.

I quickly went aft to the Captain's cabin. Pausing in the galley just long enough to eat some stew and drink some water on the way. Johnny was there and as I silently handed the envelope to him his face turned almost purple with rage.

"So the little beggar has turned traitor," he fumed, "I'll deal with him!", and with that he raced above to the aft deck and confronted the Weasel. Weasel shivered and shrank before Johnny's awful rage and the scuffle was brief and noisy. Within moments Johnny and Pete had the Weasel firmly trussed up like a chicken and thrown below!

Johnny turned to me and smiled, "Now I think we are safe to carry on with our plan," he lowered an orange line over the side of the vessel as he spoke, "just tie the treasure to this and tug on it as a signal and we will pull you aboard."

I put on my mask, switched on my flashlight and, with a friendly wave at Johnny, I dived into the ocean.

I was immediately glad that I had thought to bring along the shark repellent as I was confronted by a shark almost as soon as I entered the water. I opened the canister and it did the trick. The shark swam away, 'Good stuff this shark repellent,' I thought, 'it's fatal to open in the air but it is great under water!'

I swam straight down until I came to the top foredeck of the wreck. There was a hole at my feet and I went down immediately to explore the lower decks. I knew my air wouldn't last too long so I had to be quick.

I went down again and aft to a supply locker. Above the supply locker was a cabin which was still full of trapped air. I didn't open the south door of the cabin because I didn't want to flood the cabin in case I needed a dry place later on so I went down again, opened the door to the Mine Locker and swam south.

Most of the active mines were tethered to the deck but I saw that one of them had broken free and was floating up near an enticing hole in the ceiling. This was going to be a problem.

Carefully, I swam a little nearer and with the greatest of care and with a pounding heart, I put the electromagnet between the spikes of the mine and held it against the body. So far so good. I then switched on the magnet and it clung like a limpet to the mine.

Making sure that it was secure I let go and watched in relief as the weight of the magnet slowly and gently brought the mine down to the level of the deck and held it there.

I swam up through the hole and found myself in the old dining room. There was a door to the north which I knew must lead to the dry cabin so I left it alone and concentrated on the narrow passage which led south. It was far too narrow for me to swim through whilst I was wearing my tanks so I had to remove and carry the tank as I swam south through the passage and into the wrecked Purser's cabin.

There before me was a large safe! I turned on my drill and carefully drilled it open. I turned off the drill immediately because its power was now running low and examined the contents of the safe.

There was a large glass case with a shelf inside. On the shelf were a collection of rare stamps which were worth millions! I took the glass case but was horrified to see that there was a crack in the bottom of it and salt water was seeping into it at an alarming rate. If I didn't think of something quickly the stamps would be ruined and worthless!

I swam quickly through the narrow passage with the glass case and down the hole to the Mine Locker, through the supply locker and up through the hole into the cabin full of air. Phew! At least the water level inside the case had stopped rising but how on earth to empty it again? If I tipped it up to pour the water out the water would slosh against the stamps. Then, happily, I had an idea.

I turned on the drill and carefully drilled a hole in the bottom of the case just next to the crack. There was just enough power in the drill to do it because, as I finished, the drill sputtered and died. But the water poured out of the hole and left the stamps dry and intact!

I opened the tube of putty and, taking a glob of it, I sealed up both the hole and the crack to make the case watertight. I swam back through the ship and upwards through the murky water towards the Night Wind. I was so excited that I quite forgot about the orange line hanging over the side and I scrambled up on to the deck with my treasure.

Oh, mateys! I just wish you had been there with me to share in the excitement and joy of our celebrations. Johnny kept thumping me on the back and laughing so much that I could hardly breathe! We were a really merry trio as we made out w/ back towards home singing and laughing and telling each other about the wonderful things we planned to do with our shares.

The only person on board who was not happy was the Weasel, tied up below and gnashing his teeth bitterly as he listened to our merry noise while he tried to formulate an acceptable explanation to give to McGinty for his failure!

.....

The above is the solution to follow if Johnny shows you a plate at the beginning of the adventure. If he shows you a coin there are some differences which are given on the next page.

You will be diving for the Sao Vera. When Johnny asks you if the wreck lies deeper than 200 feet answer "Yes" and he will hire the Mary Margaret instead of the Night Wind. The Latitude is 40 degrees and the Longitude is 45 degrees. The items you need to buy are the flashlight and the shark repellent, you can also buy a dry cell but it isn't essential. You arrive at your destination on board the Mary Margaret and are lying on your bunk having just woken up

Get off the bunk and go to the storage locker. If you've got the dry cell open the small machine and insert the dry cell inside the compartment, close compartment. Get deep sea diving suit, flashlight and shark repellent. Go back to your bunk and get the envelope from its hiding place. Go to Johnny with the envelope, stopping off in the galley for food and water. Show Johnny the envelope and he will deal with the Weasel. He will also show you the orange line which you will need to use this time. Wear the diving suit, attach hose (on compressor) to suit and then turn on the compressor. Jump into the ocean, turn on the flashlight and open the shark repellent. Keep going down until you arrive at the wreck.

You find yourself on the top deck of the Sao Vera, with a hole at your feet. You must go down this hole. The ladder will break but don't worry about it. Make your way south into the room with the iron bars and get one of them. Go to the room with the bunks barring the way. Move the bunks with the bar and then wedge the bar under the bunks to keep them from re-blocking the passage. Go through the passage to a room with a ladder leading down, climb down it. This time only part of the ladder breaks. Go North and you'll find a sleeping squid. Don't attempt to do anything in this location or you will wake the squid and it won't be very pleased! Just pass through to the next location where you will find an oak chest. If you switch on your machine it will start clicking very fast, could this be the treasure? Ignore the chest and carry on north.

You will find a room with some skeletons which you must examine. You will see that one is wearing a scabbard which contains a sword. Get the sword and go north again where you will find a maple chest, the machine indicates that there is nothing metal in the chest but we can find another use for it.

Push the maple chest south until you reach the oak chest. Push the oak chest west through the hole very carefully. Wait until the orange line appears. Get the line and tie it to the chest. Tug on the line and the chest will slowly make its way upward. Don't attempt to go up yourself. Remember that you are dragging an air hose behind you so must go back the way you came. Go back to the maple chest and push it south again into the room with the ladder. Climb on the chest and you'll be able to climb the ladder safely.

Go north until you reach the room with the cask. Push the cask north until you reach the location that has a mast with a rope tied to it. Climb on the cask and cut the rope with the sword, drop the sword and climb up and out. Keep going up until you reach the Mary Margaret. The chest will then be opened and the treasure of hundreds of gold coins will be revealed.

ADVENTURE COMPLETED

SANDRA'S CHATLINE

As the kids are hopeless at taking messages when I'm out I've decided to put aside a few hours on a Saturday morning to man the phone. So, if you have any queries about your subscriptions or you fancy a chat then give me a ring on 0942 217044 between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. and you'll be sure of catching me at home.

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